

# Reading Toolkit: Grade 7 Objective 2.A.2.f

Standard 2.0 Comprehension of Informational Text

Topic A. Comprehension of Informational Text

Indicator 2. Analyze text features to facilitate understanding of informational texts

Objective f. Analyze the relationship between the text features and the content of the text as a whole

Assessment Limits:

Connections between text features and meaning

Connections between text features and meaning

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## Lesson Seeds

### Reading Grade 7 Objective 2.A.2.f

#### Activities

- The teacher will provide students with an informational text with multiple and varied text features where the main idea has been identified. Students will read the text, locate the text features, determine whether they support the main idea of the text, and explain how those selected features support the main idea of the text.
- The teacher will divide the class into four groups. The members of each group will become specialists on one text feature—print, graphic, informational, and organizational. The teacher will rotate a series of folders or envelopes containing informational texts with multiple and varied text features. As the folders rotate among the groups, students will read the text and focus only on their "special" text feature, recording the type of information it yields and the importance of that information to understanding the text. After the rotation is complete, the teacher will conduct a review of each text. The teacher will select a text and four students, one from each "specialty" group who will explain how that text feature contributes to comprehension of the text.
- Students will read an informational text which has multiple and varied text features but does not have illustrations. The teacher will provide students with multiple illustrations. Students will select a single illustration that enhances the text and existing text features. Next students will explain how the inclusion of that illustration fits the text, citing portions of text as support, to assist a reader in comprehension of the text.
- The teacher will model a think-aloud strategy to choose the most useful manual or set of directions to complete a specific task. For example, the teacher may have three computer manuals and compare the text features of each. He/she will explain why one manual is more useful than the others. The students will then read other informational texts provided by the teacher, and follow the same procedure with a partner or in a small group. As a follow up activity students could follow a set of the directions that they have studied and determine whether their assumptions about usefulness were correct. Students could also work in pairs or small groups to clarify directions that are confusing and share with their classmates how they could make the directions more meaningful/purposeful.

## Clarification

### Reading Grade 7 Indicator 2.A.2

To show proficiency of the skills stated in this indicator, a reader will be able to **identify, use, and analyze text features**. These text features are purposeful and send visual signals to the reader about the nature and use of the content. As the complexity of texts increases, these features lead readers first to make predictions about the text and later to draw conclusions from the text.

In order to gain full comprehension of a text, a reader should **use print features and analyze text features**. A reader should take note of the use of bold or italic type, font type and size, colored type, underlining, and quotation marks, which allow insight into the relative importance and organization of a text. These varied uses of print features focus a reader's attention on specific aspects of text and help a reader gauge the importance of ideas and their relationship to each other.

Effective **use and analysis of graphic aids** is necessary to comprehend informational text. When using graphic aids, a reader should be able to identify the information the aid provides and determine a purpose for its use. Photographs and illustrations with or without captions deliver a quick insight into the content of a text. Cartoons relay an author's attitude and can, with minimum text, serve as a persuasive device. Maps, graphs, diagrams, and tables deliver much information from minimal text. Combining the information a graphic provides with effective use of print features enhances a reader's comprehension of a total text. This, in turn, allows a reader to draw conclusions about the importance of the information.

**Using and analyzing informational aids** is a vital component in text comprehension. A preview of text helps a reader prepare for accessing information. Timelines, glossed words (words defined within the text), bulleted lists, and pronunciation keys throughout the text assist a reader in securing specialized information that will increase comprehension. Recognition of transitional words helps a reader follow a sequence of events or development of an idea, argument, or persuasion. Footnotes and works cited establish a source from which a student can judge the reliability of a text. Analyzing informational aids in combination with print and graphic aids supports the comprehension of a text.

When a reader **uses and analyzes the organizational aids** in a text, he or she focuses on a general outline of information that contributes to meaning. Tables of contents set the order in which information is presented while titles, subtitles, headings, and subheadings within a chapter or section establish a sequence or degree of importance of that information. These aids along with other standard features such as glossaries and indices help a reader develop understanding of a text.

To **use and analyze online information**, a reader needs to use and analyze online features effectively. Once a reader knows the location and use of the URL, he or she can access additional sources of information through hypertext links or drop down menus. Knowing how these features work allows a reader to maneuver through a website to read with purpose and gather information.

#### URL

Uniform Resource Locator is the address of the website.

#### Home Page

This page is the first one in a website.

### Hypertext Links

Highlighted or underlined text will take a user to another website which has related information. A link to another website is indicated when the cursor moves over highlighted or underlined text and the cursor changes to a hand with a pointed finger. Left clicking the cursor allows a user to access that website.

### Drop Down Menu

These menus and lists are signaled by inverted pyramids. When the inverted pyramid is clicked on, a series of other sources appears.

### Sidebar

Information, such as site maps, lists, or explanations of the site, are set off in boxed text.

Locating the sponsor of a website combined with focused reading helps a reader judge the reliability of a source. Using certain elements of print, graphic, and organizational aids, a reader can make judgments about online text and construct meaning from it.

As readers have more experiences with these skills and with increasingly complex texts, their cognitive abilities will also increase. Experienced readers will be able to identify, explain, and analyze how all text features can support the main idea of a text. Readers will understand how these features contribute to and complement each other to help a reader construct meaning of an entire text.

## Public Release Item #1 Brief Constructed Response (BCR) Item with Annotated Student Responses

### Question

Read "Tackling the Trash" and answer the following question. Explain how the information in the chart helps to clarify the main ideas of the article. Use information from the chart and the article in your explanation. Write your answer in your answer book.

### Annotated Student Responses

The chart under the article helps to clarify the information because in the article it only say that chad and his helpers took forever and put a lot of effort into cleaning the river. If the chart wasnt there you could have thought they were just picking up some paper and soda bottles along the river. But they werent. The chart says they took out 287 refrigerators, 14,240 pounds of metal, 46 washing machines! As you can see this chart helps us understand chad and his helpers put a lot of hard work cleaning this filthy Mississippi river.

Score for Sample Student Response #1: Rubric Score 3

Annotation, Using the Rubric: This response demonstrates an understanding of the complexities of the text. The student states that, "...in the article it only say that Chad and his helpers took forever and put a lot of effort into cleaning the river." The student recognizes that the chart provides support for the text: "If the chart wasn't there you could have thought they were just picking up some paper and soda bottles." The student uses text-relevant information to clarify the enormity of the task by citing specific information from the chart: "The chart says they took out 287 refrigerators, 14,240 pounds of metal...."

The information in the chart really gives you an idea of how much work Chad did, the article explains what he picked up, but the chart shows you how much he picked up, giving you a clearer picture of what Chad did.

Score for Sample Student Response #2: Rubric Score 2

Annotation, Using the Rubric: This response demonstrates a general understanding of the text. The student uses text-relevant information to explain how the chart helped clarify the main idea; "...shows how much he picked up."

The information in the chart helps to clarify the main idea of the article because it that Chad and he crew cleaned up a lot and it was very nice.

Score for Sample Student Response #3: Rubric Score 1

Annotation, Using the Rubric: This response demonstrates a minimal understanding of the text. The student uses minimal information to explain the use of the chart; "...Chad and he crew cleaned up a lot."

Chad tells people to help him but they said ok his crew helped fight mosquitoes and summer storms.

Score for Sample Student Response #4: Rubric Score 0

Annotation, Using the Rubric: This response is irrelevant to the question.

## Handouts

## Tackling The Trash

By Jill Esbaum

<sup>1</sup>In May of 1997, Chad Pregracke came home from college for summer vacation. As usual, he was disgusted by the junk that littered the riverbanks of the Mississippi near his hometown of East Moline, Illinois. But this time, instead of wondering why someone else didn't clean it up, he decided to tackle a few miles of shoreline himself.

With only a flat-bottom boat, a wheelbarrow, and a sturdy pair of gloves, he motored up and down the river. Whenever he spotted trash, he pulled to shore and picked it up. When his boat was full, he took the load to a landfill. Chad even took pictures of the junk he hauled away. "I thought it might be fun to see how much I could pick up," he says.

<sup>3</sup>Soon the riverbanks near his hometown were litter-free. And Chad was hooked. "I really enjoyed it," he says. "I could see the results day after day. It made me feel good to help my community." So he kept going, sleeping under a tarp each night.

But Chad's money was disappearing fast. Food, gasoline for his boat, landfill charges, and film costs were gobbling up his resources. He wondered if others would help support his cleanup.

<sup>5</sup>First Chad talked to government agencies like the National Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. While happy about his work, they didn't have much money to donate.

So Chad called area businesses. He explained about growing up beside the river, the mess it had become, and his determination to clean it up. Most companies wouldn't help either. But finally one company decided to lend a hand. Chad got his first small grant and the encouragement he needed to find others to help as well.

<sup>7</sup>Chad began visiting other companies in person and found that his careful record keeping paid off. People couldn't help being impressed by his enthusiasm, or by the pictures of the junk he'd already hauled away. The next year, Chad received enough money to finish his summer's work with several volunteers to help him. In two years he raised enough money to buy two more boats and hire five helpers for the next summer.

In 1998, Chad's goal was to clean 1,000 miles of shoreline. Beginning in northern Iowa, he and his crew slowly worked their way south. Their final destination was St. Louis,

**What has Chad taken out of the rivers?  
Here is a partial list of what he's pulled out as of July 2001.**

- |                               |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • 13 air conditioners         | • 171 coolers            |
| • 8 anchors                   | • 2 swing sets           |
| • 348 bottles of antifreeze   | • 49 sinks               |
| • 18 duck decoys              | • 72 TV sets             |
| • 3 baby pools                | • 55 life jackets        |
| • 968 buckets                 | • 4,870 car tires        |
| • 287 refrigerators           | • 28 garbage cans        |
| • 1,109 55-gallon steel drums | • 14,240 pounds of metal |
| • 27 bicycles                 | • 223 milk crates        |
| • 40 barbeque grills          | • 46 washing machines    |
| • 430 feet of steel cable     | • 56 stoves              |
| • 90 boat bumpers             | • 350 propane tanks      |
| • 75 water heaters            | • 28 toilets             |
| • 307 chairs                  |                          |



Missouri. Along the way, Chad had to receive permission from each town to pile his junk in a parking lot or field. When he finished each area, he trucked the trash to the nearest landfill.

<sup>9</sup>As the hot summer wore on, the work became more difficult. The farther south they traveled, the more trash littered the shore. One mile of shoreline was so full of old tires, it took more than a month to clean—one small boatload at a time. Sheltered only by tents and tarps, Chad and his crew battled mosquitoes and summer storms. By summer's end, only Chad and one helper remained on the job. When cold weather forced them to stop, they were just fifty miles from St. Louis.

Chad didn't spend the winter months catching up on sleep. He needed to raise more than \$100,000. Part of the money would go toward finishing his work near St. Louis. The rest would fund his next project, cleaning the 270-mile shoreline of the Illinois River.

<sup>11</sup>Chad also traveled from town to town. He spoke at schools, churches, and town halls. He shared his story with community groups, conservation clubs, and Scout troops. He asked them to help keep the river clean.

People were eager to help. Someone even offered him a used houseboat for free. There was only one catch: it was resting on the muddy bottom of the Illinois River. "It was a real mess," Chad remembers. "The most totally trashed thing you've seen in your life."

<sup>13</sup>After a lot of repair work and elbow grease, The Miracle became the crew's floating home and headquarters—a big step up from tents and tarps.

In 2000, Chad began hosting community-wide cleanup days in cities along the Mississippi. "I want to get as many people involved as possible," he says.

## Rubric - Brief Constructed Response (BCR)

### Score 3

The response demonstrates an understanding of the complexities of the text.

- Addresses the demands of the question
- Effectively uses text-relevant<sup>1</sup> information to clarify or extend understanding

### Score 2

The response demonstrates a general understanding of the text.

- Partially addresses the demands of the question
- Uses text-relevant<sup>1</sup> information to show understanding

### Score 1

The response demonstrates a minimal understanding of the text.

- Minimally addresses the demands of the question
- Uses minimal information to show some understanding of the text in relation to the question

### Score 0

The response is completely incorrect, irrelevant to the question, or missing.<sup>2</sup>

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Text-relevant: This information may or may not be an exact copy (quote) of the text but is clearly related to the text and often shows an analysis and/or interpretation of important ideas. Students may incorporate information to show connections to relevant prior experience as appropriate.

<sup>2</sup> An exact copy (quote) or paraphrase of the question that provides no new relevant information will receive a score of "0".

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